

EXHIBIT 9
DATE 2/4/2011
HB

Key Strategies of Graduation Matters Montana:



Superintendent of
Public Instruction
Denise Juneau

1. Pass legislation to **raise the legal dropout age** from "age 16" to "age 18 or upon graduation."
2. Established the first-ever State Superintendent's **Student Advisory Board** to provide a student perspective about dropout prevention.
3. Updated OPI's **data-collecting capacity** to ensure we know the exact scope of the problem.
4. Requested funding to allow every high school junior to take **the ACT** test, giving them the access and opportunity to go to college.
5. Became a state partner in the "**Partnership for 21st Century Skills**," an initiative to ensure Montana students are armed with the skills and tools they need to enter college and be competitive in the 21st century workforce.
6. Joining 40 other states in adopting evidence-based **National Common Core Standards** in English Language Arts and Math that are higher, clearer and more rigorous benchmarks for student achievement.
7. Building **business partnerships** to connect business and industry to student success.
8. Working with schools, post-secondary education and businesses to establish Big Sky Pathways, which provides **quality career preparation** for students.
9. Work to **improve Montana's lowest performing schools** through OPI's "Schools of Promise" initiative.
10. Support **flexibility in learning** through programs such as the Montana Digital Academy, a new program which offers students access to online courses taught by Montana teachers.



**Graduation
Matters
Montana**
opi.mt.gov



Graduation Matters Montana

opi.mt.gov

**Superintendent of Public Instruction
Denise Juneau believes we need to set
an expectation that every child
graduates from high school.**

Objectives

1. Increase the rate of Montana students graduating from high school college- and career-ready.
2. Establish a support network between schools, businesses, and community organizations for student success.
3. Create school-based and community-based opportunities to inspire students to stay in school and graduate.

THE FACTS

The current legal dropout age of 16 was established in 1921—a time of very different social and economic circumstances than today.

During the 2009-2010 school year, 2,010 students in grades 7 through 12 dropped out of school.

ECONOMICS

There is a well-documented earnings gap between high school graduates and dropouts—*an annual difference of \$9,200.*

In 2005, 21% of families with no high school diploma were living below the poverty line compared to 7.1% of those with high school diplomas. Workers who did not graduate have an unemployment rate that is twice as high as someone who has a high school diploma.

Nearly 80% of men and 75% of women in Montana State Prison are high school dropouts. About 35% of the population in the Montana State Prison system has achieved neither a diploma nor a GED.

